

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) A catalyst carrier comprising:

~~a ceramic substrate composed mainly of ceramics;~~ a cordierite honeycomb structure having a plurality of cells; and

a pre-coat layer ~~applied~~ formed on the ~~ceramic substrate,~~ walls of the cells,

wherein the pre-coat layer comprises titanium oxide (TiO_2) in an amount of at least ~~30 mass %;~~ and

~~wherein the ceramic substrate is a honeycomb structure;~~ 30% so as to protect the walls from an alkali and/or an alkali earth metal when used for purifying an exhaust gas.

9. (Previously Presented) The catalyst carrier according to claim 8, wherein at least a part of said TiO_2 is rutile type TiO_2 .

10. (Previously Presented) The catalyst carrier according to claim 9, wherein a ratio of the rutile type TiO_2 to the whole TiO_2 is at least 50 mass %.

11. (Previously Presented) The catalyst carrier according to claim 8, wherein an amount of the pre-coat layer per unit volume of the catalyst carrier (amount of the pre-coat layer/volume of the catalyst carrier) is 5 to 200 g/liter.

12. (Previously Presented) The catalyst carrier according to claim 8, wherein the ceramics is cordierite.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) A catalyst body comprising:

a catalyst carrier having ~~a ceramic substrate composed mainly of ceramics, a cordierite honeycomb structure having a plurality of cells, and a pre-coat layer applied formed~~ on the ~~ceramic substrate, walls of the cells,~~ the pre-coat layer having titanium oxide (TiO₂) in an amount of at least ~~30 mass %;~~

~~wherein the ceramic substrate is a honeycomb structure; 30% so as to protect the walls from an alkali and/or an alkali earth metal when used for purifying an exhaust gas, and wherein~~

the alkali metal and/or alkaline earth metal is loaded on the catalyst carrier.

15. (New) The catalyst body according to claim 14, wherein the alkali metal and/or alkaline earth metal is configured as a catalyst for NO_x reduction contained in an exhaust gas from an engine.